

CIRCULAR LETTER NO. 2

January 14, 2005

TO ALL LOCAL CHAIRPERSONS:

Dear Sirs and Brothers:

As an on-going process in the General Chairman's office, we send out Circular Letters as circumstances dictate in regard to issues that are of importance to all of our Membership. We are requesting that you read these documents at your Union Meetings for the Membership's benefit and also place them on bulletin boards for those Members who cannot attend the Union Meeting. Incorporated below are issues of importance for our Membership.

FRA Advisory-Position of Switches :

Following the recent derailment and hazardous release in South Carolina, the Federal Railroad Administration has issued a Safety Advisory to the nations railroads. The Advisory requires railroads to implement positive measures to ensure that main track switches in non-signaled territory are properly lined.

The FRA is strongly urging carriers to implement rules requiring notification of switch position prior to reporting clear of authorized track limits; and a rule to require the Conductor to complete a "Switch Position Awareness Form", which should state the train symbol, location, and time the switch is operated to normal position.

The recent incident in South Carolina, as well as other, less serious incidents on other rail lines, has focused the attention of safety regulators on this aspect of operating rules compliance. Advise your members that particular care must be exercised when operating main track switches; expect increased testing and surveillance of employees when utilizing switches connected to main tracks. The responsibility for rule compliance rests with all employees. The results of a mistake can also involve personal tragedy; one of the fatalities in South Carolina was the engineer of the moving train.

Trusting this information will aid you in keeping our Membership informed of issues confronting us and with best personal wishes, I remain

Fraternal ly yours,



Michael J. Reedy
General Chairman, G. C. A.

MJR: j g

cc: Paul Thompson, President - UTU
Rick Marceau, Assistant President - UTU
Dan Johnson, III - General Secretary/Treasurer - UTU

